

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - DELAWARE STATE AUDITORS OFFICE



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## **Kathy McGuinness presents JFC with budget proposal to restore eroded Auditor's Office to relevancy**

**DOVER (Feb. 5, 2019)** - Delaware State Auditor Kathy McGuinness appeared before the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) Tuesday morning to present a plan to improve performance and restore relevancy in the Auditor's Office.

Over the course of the last decade, inconsistent funding and chronic understaffing has created significant challenges in the Auditor's Office. State Auditor Kathy McGuinness' strategy aims to restore office funding and staffing to a level and capacity not seen since Fiscal Year 2008.

Her proposal maintains the current funding level in order to fully staff the office, and also seeks to create four new, non-auditing policy positions to work with financial auditors in areas where the state spends a majority of its money, like education, health, and social services.

Without adequate staffing, the office's capability to conduct and oversee audits diminishes along with its ability to meet minimum auditing standards set forth nationally for all government auditors.

State Auditor Kathy McGuinness has requested funding for five new auditing positions to perform quality review work of in-house and contracted audit engagements to ensure the office fully complies with these standards.

"We need to do this because we want to support the state by making sure mandated audits are completed, and completed in a timely manner," State Auditor Kathy McGuinness emphasized to the JFC.

One of the first things State Auditor Kathy McGuiness began during the transition period following her election was thoroughly reviewing operations, contracts, procedures and processes within the office.

With a significant amount of state government located in New Castle County, the Auditor's Office is looking to restore its presence in Wilmington, which was recently abandoned. In addition, given the amount of auditing work now taking place in Sussex County, the importance of establishing a presence there was raised as well during the hearing.

Since Fiscal Year 2014, the annual growth rate for the Auditor's Office has remained below 1-percent. Cumulatively, this inconsistent funding over the course of more than ten years has contributed to the erosion of the office's capabilities.

In order to support the office's drive to restore staff and expand, McGuiness requested additional funds from the JFC for training and professional development, which the staff of the office has requested.

"We need to do this this because we want to support the state by making sure mandated audits are completed and completed in a timely manner," said McGuiness. "And ensure we have the resources to combat fraud, waste and abuse; and we can operate with independence at a high level. The time is now to restore, reset, and reorganize for the benefit of ALL Delawareans."